11.05 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS

Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Reports

[English]

SHRI ABDUL REHMAN ANTULAY (Kulaba) : Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals :

(1) Ninth Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry fo Petroleum and Natural Gas.

(2) Tenth Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

(3) Eleventh Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, Department of Fertilisers.

11.05¼ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Reports

[English]

SHRI NURUL ISLAM (Dhubri) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Commerce :

(1) Twenty-eighth Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Commerce (Department of Commerce) ;

(2) Twenty-ninth Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Commerce (Departement of Supply); and

(3) Thirtieth Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Textiles.

11.05½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY

Twenty-Second Report

[English]

KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO (Sundergarh) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (Hindi and English versions) of the Twenty-second Report of the Standing Committee on Industry on the Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministries of Mines, Steel and Industry.

11.05¾ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh Reports

[English]

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS (Jalpaiguri) : Sir , I beg to lay the Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests on the Demands for Grants (1997-98) of Departments of Science and Technology and Ocean Development respectively.

11.06 hrs.

RE: CHARGES FRAMED BY CBI AGAINST A MINISTER AND OTHERS

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Member, I have a number of notices from hon. Members including the Leader of the Opposition on the situation arising out of the decision of the CBI to file charge-sheets and to start criminal proceedings against a Union Minister and the Chief Minister of Bihar. I will allow hon. Members to raise the issue. But may I remind the House of Rule 31 of the Manual of Business and Procedure of the House. I want to quote that here :

> "Reference by Members to the Chief Minister of a State is not in order as he is not responsible to the House."

There have been a number of rulings by different Speakers. Please keep that in mind. But since we have here the case of a Union Minister also, I would request hon. Members to be very careful. Restrain yourself and go to the issue and not refer to the people in high offices, particularly the Head of the Government of a State. That is all I want to say.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak on such a serious issue of public importance.

Undoubtedly, it is a matter of public importance. It is a serious matter for us because an hon. Member of this August House is alleged to be involved in this case. At present, he is a Minister of State.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the information gathered from newsitems published in various newspapers, CBI has taken a decision to prosecute him for his alleged involvement in the much publicized fodder scam of Bihar. Since he is a Minister at present, the CBI has to seek perrmission of the hon. President before taking any action against him. There are some officers of the Central Government also who are alleged to be involved in the scam and are working in that State and permission of the Central Government will also be required to prosecute them.